

Student Fees and Charges Procedure

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Purpose

This procedure describes the requirements and principles for setting student tuition and other fees, the administration and collection of fee payments at Federation University Australia (the University).

Scope

This procedure applies to all Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) students.

Students must consider this procedure in conjunction with the terms and conditions outlined in their letter of offer, or equivalent.

International students subject to the Education and Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) requirements, must also consider this procedure in conjunction with the terms and conditions of their International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement which outlines a student's enrolment contract with the University.



Actions

Fee setting

The University may impose different fees, charges and student contribution amounts for different categories of students.

The University reserves the right to vary fees and charges on an annual basis to cover increases in the cost of delivery. Fee increases are applied at the beginning of each calendar year. Tuition fee increases for Higher Education Full Fee-paying continuing students will not rise above 10% per annum (subject to rounding). Approved fee schedules will be published on the University fees website.

1.1 Higher Education

Full Fee-paying Domestic and International Tuition fees

The Tuition Fee Setting Working Group reviews and recommends domestic and international course tuition fee rates for consideration and approval by the Vice-Chancellor's Senior Team.

Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP)

Students in a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) pay a varied course fee, referred to as the Student Contribution Amount (SCA).

The University uses the maximum Student Contribution Band Amounts determined by the Australian Government for a calendar year, to set relevant Student Contribution Band Amounts.

Student services and amenities fees

In accordance with the Higher Education Support Act 2003 a Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) is charged to Higher Education students in a Commonwealth supported or Domestic Full Fee-Paying places, including enabling and non-award enrolments.

The University will use the maximum annual SSAF amount set by the Australian Government for each calendar year to set relevant SSAF rates. The University may set different SSAF amounts (including a zero amount) for different categories of students as approved by the Vice-Chancellor's Senior Team.

1.2 Vocational Education and Training (VET)

VET Domestic Tuition Fees

VET tuition fees (government supported place and full fee-paying place) are approved by the Vice-Chancellor on endorsement of the PVC, TAFE and Pathways and Chief Executive, TAFE.

VET Material Fees

VET material fees are approved by the Vice-Chancellor on endorsement of the PVC, VET and Pathways and Chief Executive, TAFE.

Fee Exemptions

The University may exempt students from paying some or all fees, under scholarship or other schemes.

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VET students enrolling under specific government initiatives may pay a reduced or no tuition fee. These initiatives are determined by state or commonwealth government and subject to change. Students enrolled in such initiatives, who exceed the maximum funded hours as set by the government, will be charged full-fee tuition accordingly.

2. Fee administration

The University assesses fees payable and provides a Tax Invoice/Statement to students outlining the amount of fees payable and the due date/s.

Tuition fees are assessed and invoiced for each enrolled unit subject, corresponding to a specific semester/ teaching period or term.

A Tax Invoice/Statement outlining the fees payable, and the payment due date/s, is issued to each student via their University student email account and is also accessible online via my Student Centre.

Graduate Research tuition fees are based on the Equivalent Full Time Student Load EFTSL that students undertake in each semester.

Students enrolled under a sponsorship, third-party or commercial arrangement are also subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable agreement or contract.

VET students accessing a government subsided place will be issued a Statement of Fees, during enrolment or prior to commencing studies, which includes indicative fees for the course. Requirements of the Statement of Fees are set by the state government.

In addition, the following is applicable to students enrolled in VET Student Loans (VSL) eligible courses:

- A student who has opted for a VSL is issued with a VSL Statement of Covered Fees for their course prior to their first census date. This statement includes the indicative course fees and shows the amounts of tuition fees that will, and will not, be covered by the VSL.
- · A student enrolled in a VSL-eligible course will also receive a VSL Fee Notice at least 14 days prior to each census date. This notice includes the tuition fees applicable for the census date, the amount that will be covered by a VSL, the loan fee (for full fee-paying subjects only), the amount required to be paid by the student and the payment due date.

3. Commonwealth assistance

3.1 Higher Education

Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP)

A CSP is subsidised by the Australian Government and is available to eligible domestic students. The government pays part of the fees and the remaining portion is called the Student Contribution Amount (SCA).

HELP Loans

Domestic students may be eligible to apply for one of the following loans under the Higher Education Loan Program HELP scheme:

- · HECS-HELP can be used by eligible CSP students to pay for their student contribution amount
- FEE-HELP can be by used by eligible Full Fee-paying students to pay for their tuition fees
- SA-HELP can be used by eligible students to pay for their student services and amenities fee (SSAF)

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OS-HELP can be used by eligible CSP students to pay expenses for study overseas

The provisions of the Higher Education Loans Program (HELP) are determined by the Commonwealth Government and the University implements procedures in relation to HELP as set out in the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

The Australian Government offers the loan schemes in accordance with the legislative requirements for eligibility, applicable type of study and determines how the HELP loan operates, including any applicable loan fees charged.

Research Training Program (RTP)

The Australian Government offers the Research Training Program (RTP) Fees Offset to cover the cost of graduate research tuition fees for eligible domestic students. Students should refer to the information published on the Federation University Graduate Research School website.

3.2 Vocational education and training (VET)

VET Student Loan (VSL)

Federation University is a VET Student Loan approved course provider and offers VET Student Loans to eligible students. Eligible VET students enrolled in an approved VET course at the Diploma level or above can use a VET Student Loan (VSL) to defer payment of tuition fees (up to the maximum course cap, as specified by the government). If the tuition fees exceed the VET Student Loans cap amount, students are required to pay the difference (gap fees) by the due date(s).

The Australian Government offers the VET Student Loans (VSL) program in accordance with the legislative requirements for eligibility and determination of course caps. The VSL program is designed to provide financial support to students undertaking higher level training in courses that address workplace and industry needs, creating better opportunities for employment. Detailed information on VSL is available on the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations website.

4. International student fees

Commencing international students must pay the specified fee deposit to the University outlined in the International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement prior to the offer expiry date.

International Students are required to pay the full fee deposit amount via the nominated online payment system specified in their offer prior to receiving a Confirmation of Enrolment from the University.

The Annual Fee (Indicative) is based on a standard 1.0 Equivalent Full-Time Study Load EFTSL of 120 credit points at the commencement fee indicated.

The fees paid in future years will be those approved by the University for the semester in which the student is studying and may not be the same as those listed in the offer.

Students enrolled in more or less than 120 credit points per year will be invoiced in accordance with their enrolled study load.

5. Students who become Permanent Residents

International students may change their visa status before or during their enrolment in a course. This section applies to students who provide evidence of becoming a permanent resident of Australia before or during their enrolment. Permanent resident status is recognised as being granted from the date that the student is issued their Visa Grant Letter from the Department of Home Affairs.

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Students are responsible for notifying the University of any changes to citizenship or visa status as soon as they occur. Students who are enrolled must notify Student Administration prior to semester census date and submit the relevant documents via an online enquiry. Any changes notified after semester census date will not be applicable until the following semester.

For further information refer to the Higher Education International Student Refund Procedure.

6. Payment of fees

Students will normally be issued an invoice for payment of fees and charges at least two weeks prior to the due date. Where a Higher Education student enrols in a unit/s less than two weeks prior to the semester due date, they must still pay their fees by the due date.

Students must pay all applicable fees by the due date specified on their Tax Invoice/Statement.

The payment due date for each semester/teaching period is published on the fees webpage.

All student fee payments must be made in Australian Dollars (AUD) and use the payment methods detailed on the Tax invoice/Statement issued by the University

Students must make all required fees payments directly to the University via approved payment methods. Students must not pay Federation University fees through an unauthorised third party.

Students who make financial transactions, including any payment of fees, that may breach the University's Statute, Regulations or policies and procedures, or applicable law will be referred to the Student Misconduct Committee, and the University may refer the student to police in the respective state.

Fee payment plans Higher Education

Eligible students may apply for a special circumstances payment plan to pay tuition fees where the student:

- makes an application before the fees due date.
- is paying full fees; and,
- does not owe any fees from a previous semester/teaching period
- can demonstrate special circumstances have caused financial hardship

All approved fee payment plans must be finalised, and fees paid in full by the last day of the semester the fees were charged for.

The following cohorts are not eligible to apply for a fee payment plan:

- students enrolled in English Language Programs
- student enrolled in non-awardcourses (single subject enrolments)
- students whose fees are paid under sponsorship arrangements
- students in a Commonwealth Supported Place
- · students with access to a HELP loan.

Fee payment plans will not be granted for payment of administrative fees and charges, fines or SSAF.

Direct Debit payment plan (VET)

Eligible students may apply for a direct debit payment plan via FACTS Management, to pay tuition and/or material fees for their current year enrolment. Eligible students will have access to apply through their financial account in the student management system.

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The following cohorts are eligible for a fee payment plan for current year fees:

- · Certificate I-IV and VCE students tuition and material fees
- Diploma and Advanced Diploma material fees only

Cost of a direct debit payment plan:

- Students will be required to pay an enrolment fee to FACTS when setting up a payment plan.
- Students will be charged a non-refundable returned payment fee for each dishonoured payment.

Important information:

- Payments will be taken automatically by FACTS via direct debit to the nominated bank account or credit card.
- Federation University can change the minimum instalment amount if a student's fees/enrolment changes after the initial payment plan is created.
- The duration of the payment plan and instalment amounts are automatically determined based on the type of payment plan and commencement date. Instalment amounts cannot be amended however, payment plans can be paid out early.
- Payment plans must be paid in full by the applicable date (in November of each year).
- All students on a direct debit payment plan will have a service indicator on their Federation University student
 account. This will prevent them from obtaining an official transcript or graduating until the direct debit payment
 plan is complete and all fees are paid in full.
- If a student withdraws outside of the VET Refund terms, they will remain liable to pay for their fees and the direct debit payment plan will continue as normal.

Termination of a direct debit payment plan:

- Federation University may terminate a student's direct debit payment plan without further notice due to missed instalments or if a payment plan becomes inactive (for example, invalid financial account, unpaid enrolment fee, blocked debits by the bank).
- Where a direct debit payment plan is terminated a hold will be applied to the student's account, preventing access to grades, graduation, obtaining an official transcript and blocking any further enrolments. Students may also be prevented from applying for another direct debit payment plan.

Refer to the student fees website for further information on <u>direct debit payment plans</u>.

Tuition Fee Scholarships

Student Finance administers tuition fee scholarships in the student management system based on approved scholarship information provided by authorised parties.

7. Debt management

7.1 Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP)

It is a condition of enrolment in a CSP that students pay their fees or, if eligible, successfully apply for a HECS-HELP loan and provide their Tax File Number, by the census date.

If a CSP student does not submit their form to obtain a HECS-HELP loan by the census date, they must make full upfront payment of their student contribution amount by the census date.

There is no extension available for the payment due date of student contribution amounts and the census date is the deadline for making all upfront payments as required by the Higher Education Support Act.

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If a student has not obtained or is not eligible for a HECS-HELP loan and has not made full upfront payment of their student contribution amount by the census date their enrolment will be cancelled immediately in accordance with Commonwealth legislation.

There is no appeal for CSP enrolment cancellation due to non-payment of fees and students are required to reapply for admission in the next semester.

7.2 Non-payment of fees

A student who has not paid their fees and charges in full by the due date will be considered to have an outstanding debt. The following information is not applicable to Higher Education CSP students.

To facilitate the recovery of debts, the following process will normally be followed for any student who has outstanding fees owing to the University:

A fee-related hold will be placed on a student account if payment of any fees or charges has not been made in full by the due date. The impacts may include:

- withholding results, including for individual items of assessment
- · withholding academic transcripts or graduation documents
- preventing attendance, enrolment or re-enrolment
- · limiting access to learning management systems
- · excluding the student from graduating

An overdue fee reminder email is issued to a student where there is an outstanding debt that is more than 2 days past the due date.

An overdue fee notice email is issued to a student where there is an outstanding debt that is more than 8 days past the due date.

Students with debt which has aged past 90 days need to have outstanding fees monitored and collection communication assigned by Student Finance as automated communications will not be issued for new debts.

A fees-related hold will only be removed from a student account when payment for all outstanding fees has been received by the University.

A higher education student who withdraws from a unit or course after the applicable census date will be financially liable for their fees.

A VET student who has unpaid fees when they are withdrawn from their unit/course outside of the refund terms will be liable to pay those outstanding fees. Refer to the VET Student Refund Procedure for further information on refund terms.

7.3 Cancellation for non-payment of fees

If the outstanding debt remains unpaid the University may take action to cancel the enrolment of the student subject to Commonwealth and State regulatory requirements. The following information is not applicable to Higher Education CSP students.

Domestic students

The University will provide at least 20 working days' notice that a student is liable to have their enrolment cancelled. During this period a student may:

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- pay the outstanding fees during this period; or
- contact Student Finance to seek a review of their fees where they believe there is an error.

International students

When there has been a failure to pay outstanding fees, the University may issue a Notice of Intention to Report to a student via their Federation University student email account.

The notice will state that:

- the student has breached their visa conditions, under Standard 8 of the National Code
- the student has 20 working days, from the date they were sent the notice, in which to appeal the decision
- the grounds for appeal and process by which appeals may be lodged
- the student will not be reported to the Department of Home Affairs while their appeal is being assessed
- If the student does not wish to participate in the internal appeals process, their Confirmation of Enrolment will be cancelled, and this may lead to the cancellation of their student visa

In the event of a Confirmation of Enrolment cancellation they should seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs in relation to their visa status.

Students who make full payment within 20 working days must advise Student Finance. Once payment has been confirmed, the University will not proceed to report the student to the Department of Home Affairs.

Cancellation Appeals

Students may appeal their enrolment cancellation on the grounds of compassionate, compelling or extenuating circumstances that have impacted their ability to pay their tuition fees on time.

To appeal students will need to explain to the University what the extenuating circumstance is that has impacted their ability to pay their tuition fees and must provide independent supporting evidence. A personal statement is not sufficient.

An extenuating circumstance is one that is beyond the student's control. Students must provide documentation (such as from a health professional, government body or agency) that demonstrates how the circumstances have impacted their ability to make payment by the due date.

Examples of compassionate/compelling circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- severe and unexpected financial hardship that has impacted on the student's ability to pay their tuition fees.
- serious illness or injury of the student.
- death or serious illness of a close family member such as a parent or grandparent.
- · major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country of the student that has impacted the student's ability to pay their tuition fees.
- a traumatic experience where a student has been a victim of a serious accident or crime.

The University will consider the student's appeal and may request additional evidence as required.

In deciding, the University may consult other members of staff and/or take into account additional information, such as class attendance records, academic progress and engagement or fee payment history.

The student will be notified of the appeal outcome via email within 10 working days.

Where a Higher Education student's course enrolment is cancelled for non-payment of fees, their current and future unit enrolments, in the cancelled course, will be withdrawn.

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Students whose course enrolment has been cancelled because of unpaid tuition fees, and then make full payment of all outstanding fees and charges may apply for re-instatement, re-admission to their cancelled course or for admission to any other course on the same basis as other applicants.

Where a student's enrolment is cancelled for non-payment of fees the student is excluded from:

- attending at any class, lecture, tutorial, exam or placement.
- · participating in any other University activity.
- · accessing University services and facilities.

7.4 Bad Debts

Amounts that have become bad debts will be processed as a write off in the student management system and a fee-related hold will remain on the student account.

The debt write-off does not constitute the settlement of the debt. The University reserves the right to recover the debt at a future date. The fees-related hold will remain and can only be removed when the student has made full payment of the debt.

Any amount owed to the University as fees or charges, including by a student whose admission is suspended or terminated, shall be payable as a bad debt and may be recovered by the University.

8. Refunds

The circumstances and conditions under which domestic and international students are eligible to seek a refund of tuition or other enrolment fees are detailed in the following:

- Higher Education Domestic Student Refund Procedure OG1329
- Higher Education International Student Refund Procedure OG885
- VET (TAFE) Student Refund Procedure OG1876

As a Table A provider Federation University is exempt from the Tuition Protection Fund.

9. Other students fees

Administrative fees and charges

The University charges administrative fees for various services including examinations, graduation, and transcripts as well as late charges for functions such as enrolment correction or reinstatement. Students can access the full schedule of administrative fees and charges via the University fees website.

Payments made for administrative fees and charges are non-refundable.

Incidental fees Higher Education

The University may set course or unit related incidental fees in accordance with the Higher Education Provider Guidelines and the Higher Education Support Act 2003. Incidental fees can include charges for goods and services not essential to a student's studies such as food, transport and accommodation costs for field trips or charges for essential goods that a student has the choice to obtain themselves. Student acknowledgment and consent must be obtained before an incidental fee is charged.

Material Fees (VET)

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The University may set other course or unit-related fees, known as material fees which may include but are not limited to excursions, uniforms, tools, and books which are purchased by the University and provided to the student.

Indicative material fee information is provided to the student at the time of enrolment in their Statement of Fees.

Payments made for material fees are normally non-refundable however, consideration for refund may be given if the student has not been issued the materials, or in exceptional circumstances. Students should contact their course area for further advice.

Overseas student health cover (Higher Education)

It is an Australian Government visa requirement that international students studying on a student visa have Overseas Student Health Cover OSHC for the duration of their student visa, including instances where students must extend their student visa.

All international students on a student visa must purchase OSHC for the length of their visa at the time of accepting their offer.

Other study costs

In addition to tuition fees, Higher Education students may be required to pay for activities and materials relevant to undertaking their course. The University <u>Course Finder</u> provides information on other study costs applicable in the course, unit or area of study.

Payments made for other study costs are normally non-refundable however, consideration for refund may be given in exceptional circumstances. Students should contact their Institute or School for further advice.

10. Sponsorship

A currently enrolled student can be sponsored by an employer or a third-party organisation that agrees to pay their course or unit tuition and other related fees and charges.

The student and the sponsor must submit a completed Fee Sponsor Agreement form, agreeing to all terms and conditions listed.

A sponsorship agreement is only valid for the unit, duration and level of sponsorship specified on the signed Fee Sponsor Agreement form. Any changes will require completion of a new Fee Sponsor Agreement form.

An invoice will be issued to the sponsor with 30-day payment terms. The sponsor must provide payment of the sponsored fees by the specified due date.

A statement of account will also be issued until the debt has been cleared.

Students remain responsible for their fees and, if the sponsor does not make full payment, the student assumes responsibility for payment of any outstanding fees.

Legislative Context

- Federation University Australia Act 2010
- Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)
- The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

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- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
- Dual Sector VET Funding Contract (Skills First Program)
- The Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance, Victoria
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- VET Student Loans Act 2016
- VET Student Loans Rules 2016

Supporting Documents

- The Federation University Australia Statute 2021
- Federation University Australia (Students) Regulations
- Federation University Australia (Operations) Regulations

Definitions

Term	Definition
Admission	The process of applying to study at the University and includes having your application considered.
Award Course Higher Education	A set of units, successful completion of which results in an award with which a student graduates from the University (i.e. Diploma, Bachelor, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Master or Doctoral degree)
Census date (Higher Education)	Deadline by which a student must finalise their enrolment for each semester, after which they are financially and academically liable for each unit subject that remains on their enrolment.
Census date (VET)	Deadline by which a student enrolled in a VSL course must take certain actions, such as withdraw from a unit(s) or a full course without financial penalty. A census date applies to each unit.
Class	Within each unit, there are classes (lectures, tutorials) that students enrol into and are identified by a class number.
Commencing student	A student who has accepted an offer to study at the University and is enrolling for the first time.
Commonwealth supported student	A student enrolled in a Commonwealth supported place (CSP).
Course	A registered course offered by the University and registered in accordance with the requirements of the ESOS Act.
Course (VET)	A series of units of vocational education and training, or the modules of a VET accredited course that combine to become a qualification from an accredited Training Package or skill set.
Course Commencement Date (VET)	The date of first scheduled training for the first unit towards the completion of the qualification in which the Eligible Individual has enrolled.
Domestic student	A student who is: • an Australian citizen (including dual citizenship) or

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	a New Zealand citizen or
	an Australian Permanent Resident Visa holder or
	an Australian Permanent Humanitarian Visa holder.
Eligible student	A student who meets the eligibility requirements
Enrolled	A student of the University in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures.
ESOS Act	The Commonwealth Government of Australia Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 as amended from time to time.
Exceptional circumstances	Circumstances that are unusual, uncommon or abnormal, and beyond the student's control.
FEE-HELP	Australian Government loan scheme that helps eligible domestic fee- paying students pay their tuition fees.
Full Fee-Paying student (VET)	A student who is ineligible for a Government Subsidised Place (GSP) or a student enrolled in a fee for service course.
Government Subsidised Place (GSP)	A VET place for which the Victorian government makes a financial contribution through the Skills First Program. Only eligible individuals can access a GSP.
HECS-HELP	Australian Government loan scheme that assists eligible Commonwealth supported place students to pay their student contributions.
HELP	Australian Government loans that help eligible students pay their student contributions HECS-HELP, tuition fees FEE-HELP, overseas study expenses (OS-HELP) or the student services and amenities fee SA-HELP.
Higher Education	Consists of qualifications ranging from undergraduate awards (bachelor degrees, associate degrees and advanced diplomas) to postgraduate awards (graduate certificates and diplomas, masters and doctoral degrees) as well as non-award single subject enrolments and cross institutional studies.
International/overseas student	'overseas students' as defined in the National Code and holds a TU 500 Student visa as defined by the ESOS Act;
	students studying off-shore who do not hold student visas; and
	 students who are in Australia on a temporary visa, including a temporary protection visa.
Material Fee (VET)	The cost of materials and other incidentals purchased by the University and provided to the student, such as tools for trade, equipment, uniforms, textbooks, excursions, etc.
Non-Award Course (Higher Education)	A course of study which does not result in an award with which a student graduates from the University.
Semester	A study period. Also known as a term or teaching period.
Skills First Program (VET)	Governing body for Further Education and Training.
Student	a. a person enrolled at the University in a unit leading to a degree, diploma, certificate, licence or other award; or

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	b. a person who is designated as a student or is of a class of persons designated as students by the Council.
Technical and Further Education TAFE	TAFE institutes are government funded Registered Training Organisations that offer Vocational Education and Training relating to a specific industry or occupation.
Tuition Fees	Enrolment fees that are directly related to the provision of a course.
Tuition Fee (VET)	Enrolment fee for a unit determined by the University for Domestic and Full Fee-paying students and Government Subsidised Place eligible students.
Unit	A component of study of a course identified by a subject area and catalogue number (i.e. ITECH 1000).
Unit (VET)	A unit of learning in a VET qualification and includes assessment requirements and specification of the standards of performance required in the workplace as defined in a training package or accredited course.
VET Student Loans (VSL)	Australian government loan program to assist eligible students enrolled in approved higher level vocational education and training (VET) courses to pay all or part of their tuition fees.
Vocational Education and Training (VET)	Consists of different training products including qualifications, units of competency, skill sets (apprenticeships and traineeships) or accredited courses. VET qualifications include but are not limited to Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), Certificate I - IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Skills Sets and short courses.

Responsibility

- Chief Financial Officer, as Approval Authority, is responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this procedure.
- Senior Manager, Student Finance, as Document Owner, is responsible for maintaining the content of this
 procedure as delegated by the Chief Financial Officer.

Promulgation

The Student Fees and Charges Procedure will be communicated throughout the University via:

 A FedNews announcement and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the University's Policy Central website.

Implementation

The Student Fees and Charges Procedure will be implemented throughout the University via:

• A FedNews announcement and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the University's Policy Central website.

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