Higher Education Domestic Student Refund Procedure

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Purpose

This procedure outlines the process for refunds relating to Higher Education Domestic Students.

Scope

The Domestic Refund Procedure applies to:

- All domestic students applying for a refund.
- Staff of the University involved in the refund of Domestic Higher Education fees paid to the University.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Census Date	The census date is the date on which a student's enrolment is finalised for a semester and applicable fees and charges are incurred. It is the last day to withdraw from a unit and have it removed from an academic record. Domestic students who withdraw on or before the census date do not incur tuition fees or student contribution amounts for that unit.
Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP)	A CSP is a higher education place for which the Commonwealth makes a financial contribution under the Act. All domestic undergraduate places at the University are Commonwealth supported. Postgraduate coursework places can be offered on a full fee-paying basis or as Commonwealth Supported Places.
Commonwealth Supported Student	A student enrolled in a Commonwealth Supported Place. Commonwealth supported students are charged a student contribution amount for each unit in which they enrol.
Domestic Student	All those students who are: • an Australian citizen • a New Zealand citizen • an Australian permanent visa holder • an eligible former permanent humanitarian visa holder, or • a Pacific engagement visa (PEV) holder
SA-HELP	Australian Government loan to help eligible students pay their Student Services and Amenities Fee.
SA-HELP assistance form	The form that you must submit to your provider to apply for a SA-HELP loan.
Student Services & Amenities Fee (SSAF)	A fee that providers can charge enrolled students for student services and amenities of a non-academic nature
Tuition Fee	The fees for enrolment in a course determined by the University for Domestic Full Fee-paying students.

Actions

Actions required to meet this procedure are outlined in the following sections:

Applying for a Refund

All students applying for a refund must complete the Refund Application - Domestic Student. Completed forms are to be submitted to Student Finance.

Credit Balances

Normally overpayment (excess payment) of Student Fees resulting in a credit balance on the student's account will automatically be transferred as payment or part payment of the student's fees payable for the next semester or to

other outstanding debts owing to the University. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of all credit amounts (excess payments) on their account and to maintain current address and contact details. Students can apply for a refund of a credit balance.

Credit amounts on a student's account up to and including $100AUD will be forfeited to the University and processed as a forfeit of an insignificant credit balance. The University deems that credit balances are insignificant balances if the credit balance is less than $100 and the student's course status is inactive for more than one semester.

Students with unclaimed credit amounts greater than $100AUD will be notified in writing of their credit amount. If refund applications are not received within twelve weeks of the date of the written communication, credit balances will be deemed as unclaimed and dealt with by the University according to the Unclaimed Monies Act 2008.

International Students Who Obtain Australian Permanent Resident Status

1. If the student has already paid the international tuition fee for the semester, a refund of the difference (if any) between the international fee and domestic tuition fee will be paid less any outstanding charges.
2. If the student has already paid the international tuition fee for the semester and has become a Commonwealth supported student, a refund will be paid less any outstanding charges.
3. If the student has already paid the international tuition fee for the semester but withdraws from the course prior to the census date, all tuition fees paid are refundable.
4. If a student obtains permanent resident status after the census date in a semester, the student will remain classified as an international student for the remainder of that semester and will be liable to pay the international tuition fee for that semester. From the following semester, the student will be classified as a permanent resident domestic student.

Full Refund

A student who withdraws from a unit or course on or before the census date in a semester is eligible for a refund of Tuition Fees or Student Contributions paid for the unit or course in that semester, as well as any credit balance on their student account.

No Refund

A student who withdraws from a unit or course after the census date in a semester will not be eligible for a refund of any Tuition Fees or Student Contributions paid unless there are special circumstances.

Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) Refund

The SSAF is calculated and charged progressively for each semester, based on your enrolment (study load) within a calendar year.

Students who withdraw from a course/unit(s) before the applicable semester census date, and have paid their SSAF upfront, may be eligible for a full/partial refund.

You are not eligible for a refund of any amount paid for your SSAF if you withdraw from your course, or units of study, after the census date in the applicable semester.

If you have elected to defer payment of your SSAF you will incur a SA-HELP debt if you withdraw from your course, or units of study, after the census date in the applicable semester.

SA HELP Incurral Date

The incurral date for SA-HELP will be the census date i.e.; the last day in which you can drop your units without being financially liable.

Important: after the incurral date no remission of SA-HELP debts is available.

For more information visit the University Student Services and Amenities Fee webpage www.federation.edu.au/fees/ssaf or the Australian Government Study Assist website www.studyassist.gov.au

Withdrawal Due to Special Circumstances

Commonwealth Supported Place and Full fee paying students withdrawing after the census date due to special circumstances should refer to the Remission of debt information available on our website and complete a Remission of Debt form.

Payment of Refunds

The University will pay any refund within 20 University working days of receiving a legible, complete and correct application, including supporting documentation if required.

Refund Appeals Process

The following appeals process is a separate application from the Remission of Debt application for Commonwealth Supported and Domestic FEE-HELP students.

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an application for a refund has the right to request a review of the decision. The student must make this request in writing within 28 days of receiving the initial decision, to the University Review Officer:

Federation University Australia
Attn: Senior Manager, Student Finance
Email: studentrefunds@federation.edu.au

The student must set out the reasons for requesting a review of the decision and provide any relevant supporting documentation. Each request for review will be considered on its merits in conjunction with the supporting documentation provided. The supporting documentation should provide enough detail for the University Review Officer (Manager, Student Finance or delegate) to make an informed decision regarding the request for review.

The review process will commence within 10 working days of lodgement of the request for review and the University Review Officer will provide written acknowledgement of receipt of the request. Once a decision has been made the University Review Officer will notify the student in writing of the decision and the reasons for making the decision.

The decision of the University Review Officer is final and there is no further avenue of appeal within the University. If a student wishes to take the matter further, then they have the right to access the external complaints and appeals process of the National Student Ombudsman. Visit https://www.nso.gov.au/ for contact details.

Australian Consumer Law

Nothing in this procedure prevents a student from taking action under the Australian Consumer Law.

Deceased Students

The personal legal representative of the Deceased Estate must apply for any excess payments which are to be refunded. The administrators must supply details about who the refund is payable to. The University reserves the right to request official documentation to support any such claims.

Bank Charges

Bank charges may be incurred by the recipient of the payment. These charges are imposed by the banking institutions and are deducted from the payment made by the University. The University has no control over such charges and therefore does not bear any responsibility for amounts deducted.

Banking Regulations

Under banking regulations, if a student had made payment with a credit card any refund must be credited to the original credit card. The University will refund to the original credit card if the initial payment was made within the previous 12 months, otherwise the refund will be processed via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

Refunds not included elsewhere

Applications for refunds that are not covered by any of the provisions of this policy will be determined on a case-by-case basis, initially by the Senior Manager, Student Finance.

Responsibilities

- Senior Manager, Student Finance
- Student Finance Staff
- Relevant Financial Operations Staff

Policy Base

- Students and Support for Students Policy
- Operations Governance Policy OG2077
- Federation University Australia (Students) Regulations
- Federation University Australia (Operations) Regulations

Associated Documents

- Remission of Debt application

Forms/Record Keeping

Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Refund Application - Domestic Students	Student Finance records / Finance Refund File	Senior Manager, Student Finance Manager, Financial Services	7 years

Refund Appeal (Letter/Appeal Application, Documentation, Outcome)	Student Finance records / Finance Refund File	Senior Manager, Student Finance Manager, Financial Services	7 years
Application for Remission of Debt	Student Administration	Coordinator, Student Administration	7 years

Forms.

- Refund Application - Domestic Student (PDF 1043.2kb)

Implementation

This Procedure will be implemented using the following strategies:

1. Documentation distribution e.g. Refund Application - Domestic Student
2. An Announcement Notice under *'FedNews'* and through the University Policy - '*Recently Approved Documents*' webpage to alert the University-wide community of the approved Policy.
3. Inclusion on the University's online Policy Library.