



## 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 AIHFE program which is approved for VET FEE-HELP.

### SCOPE

All potential and currently enrolled domestic students who are or would be entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance.

### POLICY PURPOSE

This document describes the Institute's processes and procedures for the re-crediting of FEE-HELP balances, and the review of associated decisions.

### POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Students 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 AIHFE 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be made in writing to the Registrar, AIHFE, within twelve (12) months of the withdrawal date, or if the student has not withdrawn, within twelve (12) months of the end of the period of study the VET unit was to be undertaken. Where the AIHFE allows a student to defer completion of their VET studies, the twelve (12) month period applies from the end of the extended deferral period.

Applications for re-credit can be posted to the AIHFE to PO Box 3079, SUCCESS, WA, 6964 or sent by email to [registrar@aihfe.edu.au](mailto:registrar@aihfe.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 AIHFE will consider the student's claims together with any supporting documentary evidence that substantiates the claim.

The AIHFE will ensure that steps are taken as soon as practicable by the Registrar to consider the application for re-credit of a student's FEE-HELP balance. The Registrar will give a written response of the decision on applications for re-credit of FEE-HELP balance within one (1) month of receiving it 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 AIHFE for a

review of a decision is twenty-eight (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](http://www.aat.gov.au) and that if an appeal is lodged with the AAT, an application fee of \$861 may be charged by the AAT. Information correct @ 05/09/2015.

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

A request for a review of a decision by AIHFE 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 fourteen (14) days. This written acknowledgement will include advice that if the applicant has not been informed of a decision concerning the review within forty-five (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 Registrar. A decision by the Dean of Studies shall supersede any decision made by the Registrar.

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 AIHFE will inform the Registrar of the outcome of the review. If the original decision has been varied, the Registrar is responsible for advising the Department of Education in writing of the decision to re-credit the applicants FEE-HELP balance.

The secretary of the department representing the commonwealth of Australia which has the responsibility for administering the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (The Department) or the Secretary's delegate will be the respondent for cases that are brought before the AAT. Upon the Department's receipt of notification from the AAT, the Department will notify Australian Institute of higher and Further education Pty Ltd that an appeal has been lodged. Upon receipt of this notification from the department, the review officer will provide the Department with copies of all the documents they hold that are relevant to the appeal within five (5) business days.

## SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The AIHFE must, where it is satisfied that **special circumstances** apply, re-credit a student's 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 AIHFE 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 AIHFE 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.