

Fees Policy

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1. Purpose

This policy ensures AFTRS’ compliance with:

- 1.1. The *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA Act) in relation to establishing and publishing fees for courses and subjects, and the provision and management of FEE-HELP loans.
- 1.2. The *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act) and the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* (National Code) in relation to the management and publishing of fees for international students.

This policy identifies AFTRS’ rules pertaining to:

- 1.3. Approving and publishing tuition fees.
- 1.4. The requirements and expectations for students in the management of their fees, including their communications with AFTRS about these matters.
- 1.5. The additional circumstances that are applicable to international students in relation to their fees.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to higher education courses.
- 2.2. This policy applies to enrolled students, international offer holders, and former students who are engaged in an active fee-related matter.

3. Policy Statement

Setting Fees

- 3.1. A tuition fee must be charged for each subject¹.
- 3.2. CRICOS-approved courses must have international student tuition fees set under the conditions stated in the Provider Guidelines².
- 3.3. Indicative course tuition fees are approved annually by the AFTRS Council.
- 3.4. The indicative course fee represents the total cost of all required subjects to complete a course in the calendar year that fee is published. This fee may change year-to-year.
- 3.5. Students are liable for additional costs where the indicative course fee may rise from year-to-year.
- 3.6. Indicative course fees are identified as domestic or international where necessary.
- 3.7. AFTRS may charge a student for a good or service related to the provision of their course– this is referred to as an Incidental Fee³.

Publishing Requirements

- 3.8. AFTRS will publish a *Fees Schedule for Domestic and Overseas Students* (the “Fees Schedule”) annually.
- 3.9. The Fees Schedule must state the indicative course fee for each course offered in that year.
- 3.10. The Fees Schedule must contain sufficient information to enable a person to identify the relevant tuition fee for each subject⁴.
- 3.11. The total indicative course fee, and the periods to which that fee relates, must be available to international offer holders prior to accepting their offer to study^{5,6}. AFTRS will make this available in the formal letter of offer.

Paying Tuition Fees

- 3.12. Tuition fees (here after, referred to as “fees”) are charged on a per-semester basis.
- 3.13. Each subject enrolment has a fee that is determined by the credit point value of that subject.
- 3.14. A student becomes liable for a fee after the census date passes for the subject that the fee pertains to.
- 3.15. The two payment methods are upfront or FEE-HELP.

➤ See also: [Census Dates, Upfront Payment, and FEE-HELP Payment](#)

Payment Intention

- 3.16. Each student will select a *payment intention* when they enrol in a course. This is the method by which they will pay their fees.
- 3.17. The payment intention selected at course enrolment will determine the payment method that is applied to each subject enrolment for the duration of the course.
- 3.18. A change to payment intention must be made in writing.
- 3.19. If a payment intention is changed, any changes of payment method for individual subject enrolments will not be applied where the census date has passed for those subjects.

¹ Department of Education (2003). *HESA Act*, subsection 19-85 (a)

² Department of Education (2023). *Provider Guidelines*, Ch.6 (27) (1)

³ Department of Education (2023). *Higher Education Administrative Information for Providers – 17. Incidental Fees*.

<https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-publications/higher-education-administrative-information-providers-october-2021/17-incidentals-fees>

⁴ Department of Education (2003). *HESA Act*, subsection 19-95 (2) (aa)

⁵ Department of Education (2018) *National Code*, Std. 2 (2.1.7)

⁶ Department of Education (2018) *National Code*, Std. 3 (3.3.4)



- 3.20. A student may wholly change their payment intention from one method to the other.
- 3.21. A student may instruct AFTRS to apply different payment methods to different subject fees.

Upfront Payment

- 3.22. All students may choose to pay their fees upfront.
- 3.23. Students are responsible for accessing their invoices through the Student Management System.
- 3.24. Upfront fees are paid by invoice on a per-semester basis.
- 3.25. Upfront payment terms are stated in a student's offer letter and on each invoice.
- 3.26. A student may instruct AFTRS to direct their invoice/s to a third-party payee (e.g. an employer or family member), however, the student will remain liable in the event of non-payment.
- 3.27. Where a third-party is the named payee on an invoice, that third-party will be the recipient of any refund that may be approved for the fees paid on that invoice.
- 3.28. Where a person or third-party other than the student makes a payment for a student, the invoice number must be used as a payment reference.
- 3.29. Where a payment cannot be identified against an invoice, the student will be required to produce evidence that may assist AFTRS in identifying that transaction.
- 3.30. Where a student has overdue fees, they will be informed in writing of any arrears and the options to resolve the matter prior to any escalation.
- 3.31. Unpaid fees may result in the cancellation of course enrolment by exclusion, the withholding of academic documents on course completion, or an award not being conferred.

FEE-HELP Payment

- 3.32. Eligible students may defer their fees through FEE-HELP, which is part of the Australian Government's Higher Education Loan Program (HELP).
- 3.33. FEE-HELP eligibility is determined by the HESA Act^{7,8}.
- 3.34. Students must complete an electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (eCAF) prior to the census date/s for any subjects for which they intend to defer fees.
- 3.35. AFTRS will provide students with access to the eCAF as soon as practicable.
- 3.36. AFTRS must determine FEE-HELP eligibility for each relevant student prior to a census date passing.
- 3.37. FEE-HELP loans are determined on a per-subject basis, i.e. each subject enrolment will be allocated an individual loan.
- 3.38. Students are responsible for ensuring that they have a sufficient HELP loan balance to cover the full cost of their course fees.
- 3.39. AFTRS will make all practicable efforts to inform students where it becomes aware of a potential insufficient loan balance, however, students remain liable for any impacts of an insufficient loan balance.
- 3.40. Students without a sufficient HELP loan balance to pay their full course tuition fees will be required to pay any outstanding balances through the upfront payment method. A split FEE-HELP and upfront payment is allowable under these circumstances.
- 3.41. AFTRS must repay the Australian Government any HELP amount provided on the student's behalf where a student has been incorrectly assessed as eligible for HELP.
- 3.42. Each course's eligibility to offer FEE-HELP payment for its students is determined on a case-by-case basis⁹.
- 3.43. Undergraduate courses attract a loan fee that will be applied to each subject loan and does not reduce the balance of a person's HELP loan balance¹⁰.
- 3.44. The undergraduate loan fee is set by the Australian Government, and may be varied, by legislation.

⁷ Department of Education (2003). *HESA Act*, subsection 104-1 (1)

⁸ At the time of publication, the simplified FEE-HELP eligibility requirements are available on the Study Assist website, at: <https://www.studyassist.gov.au/help-loans/fee-help> .

⁹ At the time of publication, all AFTRS undergraduate and postgraduate coursework courses are FEE-HELP eligible.

¹⁰ Department of Education (2003). *HESA Act*, subsection 137-10 (2) (b)

International Students

- 3.45. International offer holders are required to pay one semesters' tuition fees upfront by the date specified in their letter of offer.
- 3.46. International students may be subject to an administrative fee in order to process an approved refund.
- 3.47. The administrative fee is published in the Fees Schedule and is subject change year-to-year.

Census Dates

- 3.48. AFTRS must set a census date for each subject, each year.
- 3.49. The census date for each subject must be published on or before the earliest enrolment date for that subject.
- 3.50. The census dates are published in the annual Fees Schedule.
- 3.51. A student may withdraw, in writing, from a subject prior to 11.59PM on a census date without incurring a financial or academic penalty for that subject.
- 3.52. A student that withdraws, in writing, after 11.59PM on a census date can apply, in certain circumstances, for a re-credit of their HELP balance or a refund of their up-front fee payment, whichever applies.

Re-Credit of HELP Balance and Refunds of Upfront Fees

- 3.53. Where a student has not successfully completed a subject¹¹, they may be eligible for a re-credit of their HELP balance or a refund of upfront fees.
- 3.54. An application for re-credit or refund of fees ("an application") must be submitted by the student.
- 3.55. An application must be received with supporting evidence before AFTRS will consider a re-credit HELP balance or refund of upfront fees.
- 3.56. AFTRS will consider an application using the eligibility criteria stated in the HESA Act¹².
- 3.57. AFTRS will determine an outcome for an application using the special circumstances test stated in the HESA Act¹³.
- 3.58. In applicable circumstances where an application has not been made by a student, AFTRS may undertake a re-credit of HELP balance under the conditions set in the HESA Act¹⁴.

Provider Default

- 3.59. In the event of provider default, AFTRS must refund of any upfront payment made against an affected subject.
- 3.60. In the event of provider default, AFTRS must re-credit any HELP balance and cancel your HELP debt for any FEE-HELP loan(s) used to pay for the affected subject(s) under the conditions set in the Act¹⁵.

Special Financial Assistance

- 3.61. Domestic students may be eligible for special financial assistance including an upfront payment plan.
- 3.62. Applications for special financial assistance are assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.63. International students are not eligible for Financial Support.

¹¹ To successfully complete a subject a student must have received a passing grade for that subject.

¹² Department of Education (2003). *HESA Act*, subsection 104-25 (1)

¹³ Department of Education (2003). *HESA Act*, subsection 104-30 (1)

¹⁴ Department of Education (2003). *HESA Act*, subsections 104-27 (1), 104-43 (1), 104-44 (2) and 104-44 (3)

¹⁵ Department of Education (2003). *HESA Act*, subsection 104-42



5. Responsibilities

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.1. The Academic Delegations Schedule sets the decision-making authorities for all aspects of this policy.
- 5.2. The Head of Governance, or delegate, is responsible for ensuring this policy aligns with relevant legislation.
- 5.3. The Head of Student Centre, or delegate, is responsible for ensuring that AFTRS student-facing communications, documents and instructions are aligned with this policy.
- 5.4. This policy is reviewed annually.

Reporting

- 5.5. No additional reporting is required.

Records management

- 5.6. The Policy and Governance Officer will maintain all records relevant to administering this policy and procedure.
- 5.7. This policy and procedure is considered a corporate document and required to be registered in the AFTRS Policy Register.

6. Definitions

Census Date: The last date before which a person can withdraw from a unit of study and not incur an academic or financial penalty.

Domestic Student: A student who is an Australian citizen or holder of an Australian permanent visa.

International Student: A student who is not a citizen or permanent resident of Australia, citizen of New Zealand, or holder of an Australian humanitarian visa.

Offer Holder: An applicant that has been made formal an offer to study.

Subject: A unit of study as defined under the HESA Act.

Subject Enrolment: The process by which a student enters a subject within a course each study period. Each subject enrolment must be given an outcome in due course. A tuition fee must be charged for each subject enrolment.

Tuition Fee: By legislation, a provider must require every student who is enrolled in a subject, who is not Commonwealth supported, and who is not an exempt student, to pay a tuition fee for the subject.

7. Related Legislation and Documents

- Academic Delegations Schedule
- AFTRS Fee Schedule for Domestic and Overseas Students
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (*ESOS Act*)
- Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2023 (*Provider Guidelines*)
- Higher Education Support Act 2003 (*HESA Act*)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (*National Code*)



8. Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
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Responsible Officer	Head of Governance
Contact Officer	Compliance Manager
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Approval and Amendment History	Details
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Notes	This document has had its Responsible Officer and Contact Officer updated as a result of organisational restructure since its previous iteration.
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