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INTERNATIONAL REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Responsible Officer	Chief Financial Officer
Approved by	Board of Directors
Approved	28 October 2021
Commenced	29 October 2021
Review by	October 2024
Relevant Legislation	<u>Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and Regulations 2019</u> <u>Higher Education Standard Framework (HESF) 2015</u> <u>National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (The National Code) 2018</u> <u>National Standards for Foundation Programs</u> <u>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) ACT 2011</u>
Responsible Division	Finance Department

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Policy Statement	2
1.1 Authority	2
1.2 Application	2
1.3 Context and Purpose	2
1.4 Scope and Coverage	2
1.5 Special Conditions or Exceptions	2
2 Procedures	2
2.1 Application of Course Withdrawal	2
2.2 Tuition Fees Refunds: New International Students	3
2.3 Continuing Students	3
2.4 Refunds Due to Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances (Post Census Date)	3
2.5 Suspension of studies by the Institute	4
2.6 Other Refunds	4
2.7 Agreement	4
2.8 Payment of Refunds	4
2.9 Provider Default	4
2.10 Contextual Considerations	5
3. Accountabilities	5
3.1 Policy Owner	5
3.2 Responsible Officers	5
4. Supporting Information	5

INTERNATIONAL REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

4.1 Supporting Documents	5
4.2 Related Documents	5
4.3 Superseded Documents	5
5. Definitions and Acronyms	6
6. Approval and Review Details	7

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Authority

The Australian Institute of Music Limited (AIM), known as ‘the Institute’, is governed by the Board of Directors (BoD) with academic authority delegated to the Academic Board (AB) and administrative or operational authority delegated to the Leadership Group.

1.2 Application

This policy and procedure applies to delivery of AIM programs offered to international students online and at the Sydney and Melbourne campuses. If applicable, this policy and procedure will also apply in future, wherever accredited AIM programs are approved for delivery elsewhere in Australia.

1.3 Context and Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the process for tuition fee refunds to international students withdrawing from a course or unit of study.

1.4 Scope and Coverage

This policy and procedure applies to all international students enrolled in programs at the Australian Institute of Music.

This policy and procedure covers all International students at all AIM campuses.

1.5 Special Conditions or Exceptions

Nil

2 Procedures

2.1 Application of Course Withdrawal

- New international students seeking to withdraw from a course, having formally accepted a place and paid a deposit, must inform Student Recruitment in writing.
- Students enrolled seeking to withdraw from a course **must** complete and submit an application to Defer or Withdraw from Unit/Course ensuring supporting documentation is attached prior to census date. Students will not be allowed to withdraw or defer after commencement unless they have compelling reasons to do so.
- Email requests from a student indicating their intention to withdraw or defer **will not** be considered as a formal application for deferral and/or withdrawal. All requests must be submitted prior to the published census data for the relevant Study Period.
- Withdrawal post Census Date due to compassionate and compelling/special circumstances may be accepted in exceptional cases.

INTERNATIONAL REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

2.2 Tuition Fees Refunds: New International Students

Where a new international student has accepted the Letter of Offer (LOO) and gives a minimum of four (4) weeks (28 days) written notice before the commencement of a Study Period, of an inability to undertake the course, the tuition fees paid for that study period are refundable in full less an administration fee equivalent to 15% of the deposit paid.

Where a new international student gives less than four (4) weeks (28 days) written notice before the start of the Study Period of an inability to undertake the course, 50% of tuition fees for the first study period will be refunded.

Where a new international student fails to advise the Institute of their intention to withdraw from their program of enrolment and/or fails to turn up on the scheduled start date, the total amount of tuition fees for the first study period is forfeited in full.

Where a new international student is unable to commence their course due to:

- Visa refusal
- Inability to meet English requirements or,
- Inability to meet any condition on the letter of offer

The tuition fees paid for the Study Periods will be refundable in full.

2.3 Continuing Students

Where an international student gives a minimum of four (4) weeks (28 days) written notice before the commencement of a new Study Period of an inability to undertake the course, the tuition fees paid for that study period are refundable in full less an administration fee.

Where an international student withdraws from a course giving less than four (4) weeks (28 days) notice prior to the commencement of the study period the total amount of tuition fees for the Study Period for which they are enrolled, 50% of tuition fees for that study period will be refunded unless they are withdrawing due to compassionate or compelling circumstances and the request for withdrawal has been approved.

2.4 Refunds Due to Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances (Post Census Date)

A student (or the student's personal representative) may give notice by submitting an application to Defer or Withdraw from Unit/Course to the Institute that he or she is withdrawing from a course due to compassionate or compelling circumstances.

The Institute may, at its sole discretion having regard to the exceptional circumstances, grant a total or partial refund of tuition fees subject to the provision of documentary evidence in support of the application for a refund which is acceptable to the Institute.

Compassionate and compelling circumstances include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Death in the family
- Illness resulting in inability to study

INTERNATIONAL REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

2.5 Suspension of studies by the Institute

A student who is dismissed from the Institute due to misconduct or whose enrolment is terminated due to a cancellation of their student visa, shall not be eligible for a refund.

A student who is issued a Notice of Intention to Report/Withdraw due to unsatisfactory Academic Progression (as per the *Academic Progression and Intervention Policy*) will be eligible to apply for a refund of tuition fees paid for an upcoming Study Period, outside the normal period of providing 28 days' notice prior to the commencement of the study period.

In cases where an offer was made on the basis of fraudulent documents, the Institute reserves the right to retain any portion of the tuition fee.

2.6 Other Refunds

Offer based on fraudulent information.

2.6.1 International Students who Obtain Permanent Resident Visa Status

If the student obtains Permanent Resident Status and notifies the Institute after the census date for the Study Period associated to units contained in their enrolment, the student will be classified as an international student for the remainder of that study period and will be liable to pay the tuition fees applying to international students for that Study Period.

They will be eligible to pay domestic student fees for any subsequent Study Period.

2.6.2 Refund for Overpayment of Fees

When a refund is agreed in accordance with the institute's policy any overpayment of fees will be refunded to the student less any outstanding debts owing on the student account.

2.7 Agreement

When the Institute accepts an international student's signed acceptance documents (Acceptance of Offer) and student tuition deposit, the Letter of Offer will constitute a written agreement between the Institute and the international student for the purposes of the ESOS Act 2000 and the National Code.

2.8 Payment of Refunds

- Students requesting a refund of their tuition fees must complete and lodge an *Application for Refund of Fees*. When approved (including any discretionary refund granted under the section 'Refunds in compassionate and compelling circumstances') refunds will be paid to the student within four (4) weeks.
- The ESOS Act requires providers to make a full refund directly to the student or a person (other than the student) as specified in the agreement (Letter of Offer). The timeframe for refunds in the specific case of visa refusals is four (4) weeks from the default day which in this instance is the day the student advises the provider that their application has been refused
- New international student refunds are recorded in PRISMS by the Academic Administration Manager
- Refunds will be reimbursed in Australian dollars

2.9 Provider Default

In the event that:

INTERNATIONAL REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- the Institute does not start the course on the agreed start date; or
- the course ceases to be provided by the Institute at any time after it starts but before it is completed; or
- the course is not provided in full to the student because a sanction has been imposed on the Institute under Part 6 of the ESOS Act 2000; or
- the student has not withdrawn before the day of default by the Institute;

The Institute will:

- Abide with the Policies and Procedures of the relevant agencies i.e. Tuition Protection Services, Department of Education Skills Employment.

2.10 Contextual Considerations

Nil

3. Accountabilities

3.1 Policy Owner

- a. **Chief Financial Officer:** Policy Owner

3.2 Responsible Officers

- a. **Accounts Receivable Officer (ARO):** responsible for processing of student invoicing, payments and refund requests; informing the Student Data Manager of refunds paid
- b. **Academic Administration Manager** responsible for managing the withdrawal process; recording returning/continuing international student's defaults in PRISMS; recording returning/continuing international student's refunds in PRISMS.
- c. **Executive Dean of Academic Affairs (DAA) or delegate:** responsible for approving applications for withdrawal or deferral/suspension in compassionate and compelling/special circumstances; applications for withdrawal from a program or unit or study or deferring/suspending a course of study post Census Date.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 Supporting Documents

- *Application for Deferral of Studies or Withdrawal from Unit/Course*
- *Application for Refund of Fees*

4.2 Related Documents

- *Academic Progression and Intervention Policy*
- *Cancelling Suspending Deferring Student Enrolment Policy and Procedure*
- *Letter of Offer (LoO)*
- *Student Grievances and Complaints Policy and Procedure*
- *Appeals Policy & Procedure*

4.3 Superseded Documents

- QMS 4.1.12 International Student Fees including Refunds
- Refund Student Tuition Fees

INTERNATIONAL REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

5. Definitions and Acronyms

TERM/ACRONYM	DEFINITION
AIM referred to as the 'Institute'	The Australian Institute of Music Limited ABN: 89 003 261 112; PRV: 12050; CRICOS 00665C.
Census Date	When student registrar finalises student enrolment for the current period of study. the last date a domestic student can withdraw from a unit/s without incurring a financial liability
Compassionate or Compelling (Exceptional) Circumstances	<p>Are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing and could include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes • bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (Where possible a death certificate should be provided) • major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies; or • a traumatic experience which could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or ○ witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports) • where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit; or • inability to begin studying on the Classes Start date due to delay in receiving a student visa
Continuing Student	All existing students who are either returning to campus (for example from a deferral) or continuing on campus from the previous Study Period.
Defer/Suspend Enrolment	Temporarily put studies on hold.
Domestic student	A student who is an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, or a holder of an Australian permanent residence visa (holders of all categories of permanent resident visas including Humanitarian Visas).
Extenuating Circumstances	A situation outside the control /influence of a student that is deemed detrimental to a completion of a successful Study Period
International student	A student who is not a domestic student, and who may hold a student visa and is protected by the ESOS legislative framework.
New Student	Any student studying in the first Study Period of their course

INTERNATIONAL REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

TERM/ACRONYM	DEFINITION
Provider Default	Where the registered provider fails to provide a course or ceases to provide a course
Student	Any person currently enrolled by the Institute, noting that grievances or complaints from former students must be made within 30 days of their leaving the Institute.
Start Date: New Students	The first day of 'orientation' as published on the Academic Calendar
Start Date: Returning/Continuing Students	The 'Classes Start' date as published on the Academic Calendar
Student Default (Withdrawals)	Where a student does not start a course or withdraws from a course

6. Approval and Review Details

Version	Date Approval Academic Board	Date Approved by Board of Directors	Amendment Details
1.0	N/A	28/10/2021	New Policy separating the Domestic and International <i>Refund Student Tuition Fees Policy & Procedure</i>