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DOMESTIC REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Responsible Officer	Chief Financial and Operating Officer
Approved by	Board of Directors
Approved	31 August 2023
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Review by	August 2026
Relevant Legislation	Higher Education Standard Framework (HESF) 2021 Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) ACT 2011 Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003
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
1.5 Special Conditions or Exceptions	2
2 Procedures	2
2.1 Student Defaults	2
2.3 Tuition Fees Refunds: Domestic	3
2.10 Payment of Refunds	3
2.5 Suspension of Studies	3
2.6 Other Refunds	3
2.7 Provider Default	4
2.11 Contextual Considerations	4
3. Accountabilities	4
3.1 Policy Owner	4
3.2 Responsible Officers	4
4. Supporting Information	4
4.1 Supporting Documents	4
4.2 Related Documents	4
4.3 Superseded Documents	5
5. Definitions and Acronyms	5
6. Approval and Review Details	6

DOMESTIC REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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). The BoD and AB share joint responsibility for ensuring that all general and academic policies and procedures follow 'best practice' principles for Higher Education and other sectors of educational delivery, in compliance with relevant Australian legislation and current regulatory requirements.

1.2 Application

This policy and procedure applies to delivery of AIM programs offered to domestic students online and at the Sydney and Melbourne campuses. If applicable, this policy and procedure will also apply in future, wherever 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 domestic students withdrawing (student default) from a course or unit of study.

1.5 Special Conditions or Exceptions

Nil

2 Procedures

2.1 Student Defaults

2.1.1 Application of Course or Unit of Study (subject) Withdrawal/Deferral

- Students enrolled seeking to withdraw from a course or unit of study **must** complete and submit the *Application for Deferral of Studies or Withdrawal from Unit/Course* via the AIM Student Portal prior to census date ensuring supporting documentation is attached.
- 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/Deferral post Census Date due to special circumstances may be accepted in exceptional cases by the Executive Dean of Academic Affairs (or delegate) to approve as grounds for either partial or full refund of fees or re-crediting of FEE-HELP balance.
A special circumstance is defined as
 - A circumstance which was beyond the students control;
 - A circumstance/s that did not make the full impact on the student until on or after the census date/s of the unit/s; and
 - A circumstance that made it in-practicable for the student to complete the unit(s).
- If the request is lodged post Census Date and the student is not eligible to withdraw due to special circumstances the student is liable for the full cost of the course and/or unit of study and a grade of Withdrawal (WN – Withdrawn-Fail) will be noted on their academic records.
- In cases where an offer was made on the basis of fraudulent documents AIM will not grant a refund
- Withdrawal post Census Date due to compassionate and compelling/special circumstances may be accepted in exceptional cases, however, in such cases AIM will charge a \$150 administration fee.

DOMESTIC REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

2.3 Tuition Fees Refunds: Domestic

- Where a domestic student withdraws from a course by the published Census Date, and where:
 - fees have been paid upfront they will be reversed in full within 28 days, however, in such cases AIM will deduct a \$150 administration fee.
 - Fees have been paid using FEE-HELP no debt will be incurred.
- Students withdrawing from a course after the published Census Date will incur the full cost of tuition fees for the units for which they are registered for that study period unless they are eligible for a refund under special circumstances. Where they are eligible for a refund post census where:
 - fees have been paid upfront they will be reversed in full within 28 days of a decision being made
 - fees have been paid using FEE-HELP AIM will report this through the Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI) system within 7 days of the decision being made

2.10 Payment of Refunds

- Students who have paid up front and are 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.
- Refunds will be reimbursed in Australian dollars.
- Refunds will be subject to a \$150 Administration fee.

2.4 Re-crediting FEE-HELP Balance

A student can apply for a re-crediting of a FEE-HELP balance due to Special Circumstances:

- up to twelve (12) months from the date of withdrawal or if the student did not formally withdraw, within twelve (12) months after the Study Period during which the student undertook, or was to undertake the unit/s.
- they must apply to have their FEE-HELP balance recredited using the *Withdrawal from Unit/Course* via the AIM Student Portal ensuring supporting documentation is attached.
- they must ensure they include supporting documentation that confirms their Special Circumstances with their application. Applications without supporting documentation will not be considered.
- Students cannot apply for a re-crediting of a FEE-HELP balance for a unit or units that they have completed in full.

For more information visit [Study Assist](#).

2.5 Suspension of Studies

A student who is dismissed from the Institute due to misconduct 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, if the student has followed the appeals process and the appeal has been unsuccessful.

2.6 Other Refunds

2.6.2 Refund for Overpayment of Fees

DOMESTIC REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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 Provider Default

In the event that:

- 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 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.

2.7.1 FEE-HELP Student

From 2018 the Australian Government implemented interim tuition assurance arrangements for FEE-HELP students. This means, in the event that the Australian Institute of Music (AIM) ceases to provide a course of study in which a student is enrolled, the interim arrangements will ensure that the student will be supported to continue their study with another provider in a similar course. If a similar course is not available, the student may be eligible for a reaccrediting of remaining funds for units of study commenced but not completed.

2.11 Contextual Considerations

Nil

3. Accountabilities

3.1 Policy Owner

- a. **Chief Financial and Operation 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. **Student Services Manager** responsible for managing the withdrawal process.
- 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*

DOMESTIC REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

4.3 Superseded Documents

- QMS 4.1.11 Domestic Student Fees including Refunds
- Refund Student Tuition Fees

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	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: <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) • 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
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
New Student	Any student studying in the first Study Period of their course
Provider Default	Where the registered provider fails to provide a course or ceases to provide a course

DOMESTIC REFUND STUDENT TUITION FEES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

TERM/ACRONYM	DEFINITION
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 Approved by Board of Directors	Amendment Details
1.0	28 October 2021	New Policy separating the Domestic and International <i>Refund Student Tuition Fees Policy & Procedure</i>
1.1	31 August 2023	Updated to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$150 administration fee under 2.2.1 • Updated role titles