



## REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOMESTIC STUDENTS

### Purpose and scope

This policy outlines the circumstances where a refund of tuition fees or charges related to study at Signature Training College may apply for commencing and continuing students.

This policy applies to Signature Training College's higher education courses for:

- Domestic students enrolled in a fee-paying course that is not FEE-HELP enabled or who are not claiming FEE-HELP assistance
- The unused portion of tuition fees that have been paid in advance
- Domestic students enrolled in a fee-paying course who are claiming FEE-HELP assistance that have paid tuition fees in advance.

Administrative fees, incidental fees and fines are non-refundable. All dollar amounts referred to in this policy are in Australian Dollars, unless otherwise specified.

Smart and Skilled students are not required to pay any fee under Fee Free program, if there is any gap payment shown on the commitment ID, that is the only payment they are required to make. If the students require any additional SoA, they will be paying the fee mentioned in the Fee schedule.

This policy does not apply to international students.

### Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Provide transparent processes for refunds of tuition fees, where applicable
- Set out the circumstances where a full refund or a partial refund may apply
- Comply with relevant legislation.

### Definitions

**Admission** is the process for admitting an applicant into a course at Signature Training College's, following a successful application and acceptance of the offer of a place in the course.

**Applicant** is a person who has already lodged an application to study a specific course. A prospective student is generally a person who is thinking about lodging and application to study a particular course.

**Census Date** is the date when a student's enrolment is finalised. If a student withdraws after the census date, they will have to pay fees or will incur a debt if they have a FEE-HELP loan.

**Commencement Date** is the official date on which the financial liability for courses is set and the tuition fee is due for domestic students. Commencement dates are determined for each semester and are published on Signature Training College's website.

**Course** is a single course leading to an Australian higher education award.

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📍 Suite 1, 191 Church Street Parramatta NSW 2150

#### Camellia Campus

📍 Suite 2C L1, 1C Grand Avenue Camellia NSW 2142

#### International Students

✉️ info@stc.edu.au

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+61 460 003 311



**Credit transfer** is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications (Australian Qualifications Framework definition).

**Deferment** is an agreement to allow an applicant to defer taking up the place he/she has been offered until a later time.

**Domestic Student** is an Australian Citizen, Australian permanent resident or a New Zealand citizen.

**Entry Requirements** are the entry requirements that an applicant must satisfy to be admitted.

**FEE-HELP** is a loan scheme offered by the Australian Government only to domestic students to help eligible fee-paying students to pay all or part of their tuition fees.

**Full-time Study Load** is the standard full-time study load for a particular course.

**International student** means a person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, but does not include students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations.

**Letter of Offer** is the offer of a place in a course to a successful applicant.

**Letter of Release** is a letter that formally advises a student that they have been granted a release from Signature Training College and may enrol at their intended education provider.

**Offer round/s** refer to the series of dates on which offers of higher education places are issued to applicants throughout the year, whether through a tertiary admission centre or directly by a higher education provider.

**Overseas student** see International student.

**Prospective Student** is generally a person who is thinking about lodging an application to study a particular course.

**Recognition of prior learning (RPL)** is a process used to assess an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit that may be granted towards completion of a qualification (adapted from Australian Qualifications Framework definition).

**Special Circumstances** are circumstances that:

- a. Are beyond the person's control
- b. Do not make their full impact on the person until on or after the census date for the unit of study in question
- c. Make it impracticable for the person to complete the requirements for the unit in the period during which the person undertook, or was to undertake, the unit.

**Tuition Fee** is the fee for enrolment in a course determined by Signature Training College's, and advised in both the Student Agreement, and the Letter of Offer attached to the Student Agreement, as being the tuition fees for the course (per semester).

**Unit** is a discrete unit of study, where a combination of units makes up a course of study.



**Withdrawal** is a formal procedure where a student decides to discontinue a course without the intention of returning or discontinues a unit with the intention of enrolling in it at a later date.

**Withdrawal date** is the day Signature Training College’s specifies in its notice as the day the withdrawal took effect.

### Non-refundable fees and charges

Table 1 lists those administrative and incidental fees and charges that are non-refundable. These are charged in addition to tuition fees. The current list is in Table 1 below but may vary from time to time. Please check the website for an up-to-date Fee Schedule.

**Table 1: Fees and charges for domestic students**

Fees and Charges	Amount
Enrolment/Administration fee (not applicable to Smart and Skilled students)	\$250.00
RPL assessment per unit	Maximum of 50% of the full domestic student per unit fee
Credit transfer per unit	\$50
Credit transfer per unit after the census date	\$100.00
RPL assessment per unit after the census date	\$350.00
Credit and RPL assessments after the census date	\$160.00
Student ID Card Replacement Fee	\$20.00
Learner Workbook Replacement Fee per unit	\$20.00
Learner Work placement Booklet Replacement Fee	\$30.00
Printing charges	\$0.50/ one-side A4 page
Official Transcript replacement	\$20.00 + postage
Reinstatement of Enrolment	\$250.00
Graduation Gown Hire	Charged according to current hire costs

### Procedure

All refund requests, notifications of withdrawal, deferment or leaves of absence must be made in writing addressed to Administration per the procedures outlined below and in the relevant related policies. Students can hand in the documents to Reception or email the documents to [info@signaturetraining.edu.au](mailto:info@signaturetraining.edu.au).

The Academic Manager or RTO Manager assesses the academic circumstances, and then forwards the outcome of the assessment to the Accounts Officer.



Refunds may be allowed in the following circumstances:

- Participants have overpaid.
- Participants enrolled in training that has been cancelled by Signature Training Pty Ltd.
- If the participant withdraws from a course or program due to illness or extreme hardship as determined by Signature Training Pty Ltd.
- If the participant withdraws two weeks before commencing training.

## A. Application for refund

Students who wish to withdraw from a unit or course and wish to seek a refund should submit an Application for Refund Form and refer to Admissions Policy and Procedure for details of withdrawing from a unit or course. All applications for refund must be made in writing to Administration stating the reasons and relevant details. The Application for Refund Form must be completed, together with any other relevant documents, such as; the Withdrawal Form and relevant evidence supporting any request for 'special circumstance' consideration (see section Special Circumstances), and Deferment and Leave of Absence requests. Notices will not be effective until received by Administration. The form must be signed by the student or by the student's parent or guardian in circumstances where the student does not have the legal capacity to do so.

Students should apply for a refund within 14 days before commencing training.

### 1. Withdrawal decisions

The Academic Manager or RTO Manager makes the initial decision on a student's request for withdrawal regarding the refund to re-credit or remit student tuition fees (including the FEE-HELP balance). Each application for re-credit of a student's tuition fee or FEE-HELP balance is considered on its merits together with all supporting documentation substantiating the special circumstances claim. The Academic Manager or RTO Manager makes an initial decision within 28 days of the receipt of all required documentation.

If Signature Training College is satisfied that special circumstances do apply to the student's case, the student's fees are remitted or re-credited.

Where the Academic Manager or RTO Manager determines that special circumstances do not apply in a student's case, the student has the right to apply for an appeal of the original decision within a 28-day time limit.

This request must include: the date of the original decision, fully state the reasons for applying for the review and any additional evidence. This review of the original decision is conducted by the CEO or delegate (refer to section Appeals).

### 2. Domestic FEE-HELP students

Domestic FEE-HELP students may be eligible to have their HELP debt remitted (and FEE-HELP balance recredited, if applicable) under 'special circumstances' as noted in 4.3. There are no provisions for students in the HESA Act for a HELP debt to be remitted if a student has already completed a unit or course of study. If students withdraw from a unit after the census date because they changed

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their mind, students are legally obliged to repay the HELP debt, and are not able to apply to have their HELP debt remitted.

When a student who is eligible for a HELP loan and has requested FEE-HELP assistance withdraws from a unit on or before the census date, they will not incur a FEE-HELP debt for the tuition fees for that unit. If a student withdraws from a unit after the census date or does not successfully complete the unit due to special circumstances, he or she may apply for a re-credit of their FEE-HELP balance and remission of their FEE-HELP in relation to the unit. If Academic Manager or RTO Manager is satisfied that special circumstances do apply, the student’s FEE-HELP balance are re-credited. Where a student’s FEE-HELP balance is re-credited for a unit, the debt the student incurred for that unit is remitted.

### 3. Deferment and leave of absence

If a student wishes to withdraw (including deferral) from their program of study, they must notify Signature Training in writing by filling out the ‘Application for Refund - Withdrawal/Deferral Form’. The form can be found on the website or in hard copy from administration, or a copy provided at the end of this policy. This process is also to be used if students wish to withdraw from a Unit of study or defer their study.

#### Refund eligibility

Domestic students enrolled in a course can receive a refund of their tuition fees under certain circumstances, which are outlined in **Table 2: Circumstances under which refunds will be granted**. Table 3 outlines circumstances where refunds do not apply or may apply only under special circumstances.

**Table 2: Circumstances under which refunds will be granted**

Circumstances	Refund	Process
Deferment of enrolment which has been approved before the Census date.	A refund may apply, or tuition fees may be held until the new commencement date.	Complete an Application for Deferment Form before commencing the course AND an Application for Refund Form.  No fee applies.
Withdrawal from a unit or course before the Census Date for the Semester.	Full refund of any tuition fees paid.  FEE-HELP students will not incur a FEE-HELP debt.	Complete an Application for Withdrawal Form AND an Application for Refund Form.



Student default: Signature Training College withdraws the offer of enrolment; for example, if the student fails to meet the entry requirements, such as the stated level of English, or provides incorrect or incomplete information.	Full refund of any tuition fees paid.	The Academic Manager or RTO Manager communicates withdrawal of offer to the student.
Signature Training College default (unable to deliver the unit or course): Signature Training College may offer students a place in an alternative course at Signature Training College or another registered provider. In such circumstances there is no additional cost to the student, and a refund is not paid.	Full refund of any tuition fees paid.	Signature Training College refunds the tuition fees in full to the student within 28 days.  OR Signature Training College will provide an alternative course for the student at the provider's expense, in which case no refund is given to the student; OR a tuition assurance scheme is activated.

**Table 3: Circumstances under which refunds will not be granted**

Circumstances	Refund	Process
Withdrawal from a unit or course after the Census Date	No refund unless it is deemed that special circumstances apply (see Section Special Circumstances)	A student may submit an Application for Withdrawal Form, including request for special circumstances to apply, AND an Application for Refund Form.
Student default: Signature Training College cancels a student's enrolment due to reasons of: misbehaviour by the student; failure to pay amounts required in the student agreement; breach of course progress or attendance requirements.	No refund	



Student default: Signature Training College cancels a student's enrolment due to non-payment of tuition fees or other fees and charges.	No refund	
Once all completed assessments have been submitted	No refund	

**B. Special circumstances**

Special circumstances may apply to the student if Signature Training College is satisfied that the circumstances comply with Guidelines below. The student must have been enrolled in the unit or course and submitted a written application after the Census Date for special circumstances together with an Application for Withdrawal Form and provide supporting evidence.

**1. Guidelines**

The special circumstances:

- a. Were beyond the student’s control, which is reasonably considered as not due to the student’s action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which the student is not responsible and:
  - I. Were unusual for the student
  - II. Made it impractical for the student to complete the requirements of the unit in the period during which the person undertook, or was to undertake, the unit
  - III. Did not occur until on or after the Census Date for the unit/s
  - IV. Where the circumstances occurred or existed before the Census Date, worsened or changed, such that their full effect was not apparent to the student until after that date.
- b. Did not make their full impact on the person until on or after the census date for the unit of study in question
- c. Would make it impractical for a student to complete the requirements of the course/s and may include (but are not limited to):
  - I. Medical circumstances that have changed to such an extent that the student is unable to continue studying, or new medical circumstances arose
  - II. Family/personal circumstances such as death, significant medical issues, unforeseen financial difficulties, or other circumstances that are unreasonable to expect a person to continue their studies

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- III. Employment related circumstances in which the employment status or arrangements have changed so that the student is unable to continue their studies and this change is beyond their control
- IV. Course related circumstances where Signature Training College has changed the unit offered, and the student is disadvantaged by either not being able to complete the unit, or not being given credit towards other units or courses
- V. Extenuating circumstances of reasonable significance that interfere with the student's ability to meet a course's requirements. For example, carers' responsibilities, legal commitments, military service, accidents, or natural disasters.

Special circumstances do not include:

- a. Lack of knowledge or understanding of this policy or government legislation
- b. Failure to follow correct procedures
- c. Academic ability that was less than expected.

Refunds under special circumstances are discretionary and will be decided by Signature Training College.

## 2. Supporting documentation

Students should ensure that their supporting documentation complies with Signature Training College's requirements and is:

- a. In English, or has been translated and certified as an official translation from an official authority
- b. An original document or certified by a Justice of the Peace or equivalent
- c. An original medical certificate that details the condition where medical circumstances apply
- d. A statutory declaration, where relevant
- e. A detailed account of the circumstances or events that are relevant to the application, including specific dates, and demonstrates how it meets the Special Circumstances section of this policy
- f. A true and honest representation of the circumstances
- g. Other documentation requested by Signature Training College.

## C. Payment of refunds

Refunds are made within 28 days of the processing of a complete Application for Refund Form. Incomplete forms or applications without sufficient supporting documentation may cause delays in processing refunds. Refunds are paid:

- a. In Australian dollars
- b. If the tuition fee was paid by credit card within the last 12 months, then under Australian banking regulations the refund must be credited to the credit card from which the fee was initially paid if possible
- c. Directly to the person who entered into the contract with the registered provider, Signature Training College, unless that person gives written direction to pay someone else

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- d. Within 4 weeks after receipt of a written application.

Refunds are calculated as:

- Refund = total fee - administration fee where no units have been completed
- Refund = total fee - administration fee – (number of completed units' cost)

Administration records the transaction in the Student Records Management System.

## D. Appeals

Students may seek a review of any decision related to a refund application, by submitting an appeal to Student Administration within 28 days of receiving the original decision not to refund fees. It must be accompanied by supporting documentation defined below.

### 1. Student review request

Signature Training College provides students with the refund appeal process so that students know how to submit a valid request for the review of an adverse decision not to refund fees. The student review request must be submitted using Review of Application for Refund Form as well as Review of Application for Withdrawal Form. Review of Application for Refund Form includes:

- a. The date of the original decision
- b. Fully state the reasons for applying for the review
- c. Any additional relevant evidence.

### 2. Review process

When a student requests a review of the original no-refund decision, the review will be undertaken by the Review Officer, the CEO or delegate, who have not been involved in making the original decision and a decision will be made within 28 days.

If the Review Officer is satisfied that special circumstances do apply to the student's case, the student's fees will be remitted or re-credited. Students are notified of the decision within 28 days of the receipt of their review request. The Review Officer will provide a written decision to the student, including reasons for the decision and advice that a student has the right to apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) for a review of the original decision or a decision that has been reviewed.

Should the student not hear from the review officer within 45 days of receiving the request for the review, the original decision can be taken as being confirmed. If students are not satisfied with the reviewed decision, then they can make an appeal to the Board of Directors as set out in Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure or seek an external review.

The right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the Australian Consumer Law if the Australian Consumer Law applies. Student have access to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. Details of process, fees and locations of the nearest offices are available at <https://www.aat.gov.au/contact-us>.

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### Roles and responsibilities for implementation of Refund Policy and Procedure

1. Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the approval of the document.
  2. RTO Manager and Academic Manager is responsible for the implementation of the Signature Training College prevention, counselling, intervention and education strategies,
  3. Admissions Officer ensure they are familiar with fees, charges and circumstances for refunds before accepting an offer for admission to Signature Training College's higher education courses. A student who has requested loan scheme assistance incurs a debt for each unit immediately after the census date for that unit.
- Accounts Officer
    - is responsible for processing the refund and sending it to the Financial Accountants
    - who have access to information relating to fees applications must maintain the confidentiality of students' information in accordance with Signature Training College's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and Procedure. The disposal of records relating to fees applications should be in accordance with Records Management Policy and Procedure

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**Version Control and Accountable Officers**

It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this policy.

<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Accounts Officers
<b>Implementation Officer</b>	Advisory Board Chief Executive Officer RTO Manager Academic Manager
<b>Last Approval</b>	05 April 2022
<b>Review Date</b>	05 April 2023
<b>Approved by</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Associated Documents</b>	
Admissions Policy and Procedure Fee Policy and Procedure Fee Schedule Letter of Offer Letter of Release Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and Procedure Records Management Policy and Procedure Student Code of Conduct Student Enrolment Form Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure	
<b>Version Control</b>	
Version 2.0	

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