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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to clearly outline how fees are charged, what they cover, how fees are paid in advance. This complies with the Guidelines about Fees for the Skills First as per the VET Funding Contract. It also identifies the processes in place to protect the fees paid by students in advance.

## SCOPE

This policy and procedure apply to all enrolments in Advanced Education and Training (AET).

## POLICY

The proposed fees and charges for the delivery of nationally accredited training and assessment services are checked for compliance with the relevant performance agreements. Fees and other charges are generally for items such as tuition fee, course materials or textbooks, student services and training and assessment services.

Tuition Fees for Skills First government-funded students are set in accordance with the Guidelines about Fees issued by the Department each year. Tuition fees may or may not be applicable to a course.

Advanced Education and Training will publish the tuition fees for government subsidised training for each course/qualification on the website. Concession Fees are applied when eligibility criteria are satisfied.

All data including the actual tuition fee per hour (in cents) is maintained in the Student Management System, detailed in Statement of Fees and is reviewed for accuracy and integrity on a regular basis. Advanced Education and Training is entitled to charge fees for services provided to Students undertaking a course of study and for other services Advanced Education and Training may provide. The transparency, governance and management of fees and charges are integral to financial transparency and ensuring Students' rights and responsibilities are fully explained and maintained.

### PROCEDURES

#### Pre-Payment

AET does not ask for a prospective or current learner to prepay fees in excess of a total of \$1500. Payment of fees dues is due on the day or prior to the commencement of the training. AET guarantees enrolment of training once full fee is paid.

#### Skills First Approved Student Fees and Charges

A Statement of Fees is provided to each Skills First Student prior to the commencement of training and will include the following:

- The code and title and currency of course/program that the student is to be enrolled, as published on the National Register
- the total cost to them for their program, taking into account any Fee Concession or Fee Waiver entitlement.
- the approximate value of the government contribution expressed in dollars; and
- any other applicable fees, such as student services, amenities, goods or materials

AET will publish on its website:

- Up to date standard tuition fees for government subsidised training for each course it offers under the VET Funding Contract the caveat that "The student tuition fees as published are subject to change given individual circumstances at enrolment"
- details of any other fees including but not limited to student services, amenities, good or materials
- our Complaints and Appeals process

#### Course Fees

Course fees include Tuition, Materials and Administration fees. Concession tuition rates are available for concession card holders who meet eligibility requirements. (See below)

In addition to the standard course fees the following fees are applied on application by the student.

<b>ADDITIONAL FEES</b>	
Reissue of Certificate or Statement of Attainment	\$50.00 (Per certificate)
Reissue of archived Certificate or Statement of Attainment (after 3 years)	\$100.00 (Per certificate)
RPL Application fee	\$400 will be charged at the time of application and is non-refundable.
The RPL fee	Charged at a rate of \$2.00 per nominal hour for each unit of competency that RPL has been requested.

All fees and charges are published on the website in the Course information and are kept up to date. The student tuition fees as published are subject to change given individual circumstances at enrolment

### **Fee Waivers**

- AET will grant a Fee Waiver in the circumstances set out in clause 2.3 of the Guidelines About Fees
- All Fee Waivers grant will be reported in accordance with the Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection Guidelines, or as otherwise instructed by the Department.
- Any evidence required of a student's entitlement to the Fee Waiver will be sighted and copies retained prior to the commencement of training as required. (See Appendix 1)

### **Fee Concessions**

If a Skills First eligible student has a Fee Concession entitlement in accordance with the Skills First Guidelines About Fees , AET will apply a Fee Concession to standard tuition fees for enrolments in Skill Sets and qualifications at the Certificate IV level and below.

This Fee Concession will be no more than 20 per cent of the published standard tuition fee, being the fee charged to a non-Fee Concession Skills First Student in the same program at that time.

AET will report all Fee Concessions granted in accordance with the Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection Guidelines.

Each student's entitlement will be checked for a Fee Concession as part of enrolment and this must occur prior to the commencement of training

A student is entitled to a Fee Concession if they hold a current:

- a) Health Care Card issued by the Commonwealth.
- b) Pensioner Concession Card; or
- c) Veteran's Gold Card.

A dependant spouse or dependant child of a card holder is also entitled to the Fee Concession.

Students may also receive a Fee Concession if they are eligible for one of the Government initiatives specified in Clause 3.12 of the Guidelines About Fees , regardless of whether they hold one of the cards specified above.

(See Appendix 2)

### **Concessions confirmed as part of enrolment**

Where a student's Fee Concession entitlement is confirmed as part of enrolment, AET will apply the Fee Concession to all tuition fees charged for the program.

This is regardless of whether:

- all tuition fees are charged in one instance at the start of the program, or in parts by payment plan. and
- the student's Fee Concession entitlement will expire before commencement of training or before they will complete their program.

### Grace period

AET may allow a student a grace period (for example, a week or a month after the commencement of training) to provide evidence of Fee Concession entitlement if they do not immediately provide it as part of enrolment. If a grace period is allowed, AET will implement this in accordance with the following process:

- A request for a grace period must be made in writing to the CEO
  - This request may come from the student directly or from Administration on the student's behalf and the request email to be held on file
- Authority to grant the grace period, including the timeframe will be provided by the CEO in writing
- The student will be advised in writing of the authorisation and the timeline of the grace period, and this advice will include the impact and next steps if the evidence is not provided within the timeframe outlined.
- Authority email to be held on file
- All fee concession evidence requirements will be applied as usual upon presentation of the fee concession evidence within the grace period.
- If a student provides evidence after the commencement of training, it must have a start date on or before the date their training commenced.
- Where the evidence is not provided the fee concession will not apply and any applicable fees will be imposed, and payment requirement organised.

### Concessions obtained after commencement of training

If all the fees for an enrolment are not charged in one instance at the start of the program, i.e. in the case of a Payment Plan provision, AET informs the student in the Payment Plan document that if they obtain a Fee Concession entitlement after the commencement of training, they may present it and they will be charged a Fee Concession for any remaining fees not yet charged.  
(See Payment Plan declaration)

### Evidence of Fee Concession Entitlement

AET will sight evidence of a student's entitlement to a Fee Concession and retain it for audit or review purposes in a way that meets the requirements set out in Clause 3.11 of the Skills First Guidelines About Fees.

- Unless AET HAS another obligation to do so, we will **not** retain a copy of the concession card or the Centrelink Customer Reference Number when retaining evidence of concession entitlement for a Skills First student.

Evidence of Fee Concession entitlement will be sighted and retained as outlined in Appendix 3 and will use the provided forms as record

(See Digital Evidence of Eligibility or Concession Declaration)

### **Special Consideration for Financial Hardships**

An application for special consideration needs to be made to the Chief Executive Officer along with the reasons and circumstances of the financial hardship. The application should mention the future date for the payment of full fees or a request for a payment plan.

If special consideration is granted, a confirmation in writing will be sent to the student confirming the future date for the payment of full fees or outlining the payment plan for the payment of fees

### **Information regarding Fees and Charges**

All fees are to be confirmed prior to enrolment and the commencement of training. The amount to be charged for training and assessment services will be determined by the CEO and this will be consistently documented through all marketing materials and enrolment documentation (Enrolment Form).

The Compliance Manager will organise to publish the Fee Schedule on the website.

Should there be any changes to AET's fees at any time, the Compliance Manager will be responsible for organising changes to the Fee Schedule and for ensuring the schedule is updated on AET's website.

Students will be informed of the amount of the course on enrolment and required to pay their course fees/deposit to confirm their enrolment. The collection of the student fees will be documented by Administration in the Student File.

Student fees are protected by the AET fair and reasonable refund policy and procedure which is provided to students prior to enrolment.

All fees that are to be charged to a Student and the terms of a refund will be documented in the following places:

- Advanced Education and Training 's website
- Domestic Student Enrolment Form
- Student Handbook

The fees are updated by CEO annually and upon notification on changes to the fees and charges as set in the current Skills First Funding Contract and Contract Notifications issued.

The CEO and Compliance Manager will keep all relevant staff members up to date with all changes to the fees and charges and relevant policies.

### **Invoicing**

- Provide individual Statement of Fees to all prospective students prior to the commencement of training,
- AET to raise an invoice for the amount in line with the Statement of Fees provided.
- All Fee Payers should pay their deposit/enrolment fee upon enrolment, preferably prior to course commencement.
- Fee Payers have 30 days to pay an invoice.
- Keep a copy of the invoice on the student's file

## **FEES, CHARGES AND REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **Payment Plan Fee instalment invoices**

- Charge fee instalments in line with the payment plan for the course.
- Fee Payers have 30 days to pay an invoice.
- Keep a copy of the invoice on the student's file.

### **Government funded students**

- Invoices should be raised in line with government-funded fees and as agreed to on the Statement of Fees. This will normally be received at the time of enrolment.
- If there are Credits applicable, the fees are reduced by the nominal hours x tuition fee per hour for the relevant units. This does not apply to administration fee and materials fees.
- Apply concession rate if a copy of concession card, veteran's gold card or pensioner card is provided and is current at time of enrolment. Concession fee should be 20% of full government funded fee.
- Concession does not apply to administration fee and materials fees.
- Ensure waivers are granted where there is suitable evidence – refer to the Skills First Guidelines about Fees for what evidence is required.
- Ensure correct tuition fee is reported in AVETMISS files

### **Full Fee-Paying Students**

- Invoice should be raised as per the fees schedule
- If there are Credits applicable, the fees are reduced accordingly. This does not apply to administration fee and materials fees.

### **Processing Refunds**

This Policy is provided on the AET Website to ensure that AET provides each student, prior to enrolment, access to this policy that is fair, reasonable and covers scenarios relating to withdrawal by the student, program cancellation, RTO closure and any other reasonable matter and that meets the standards of your regulator.

All refund requests are conditional on the following:

AET must have received funds in order for any refunds to be made available (i.e. cheques are cleared, bank transfers have been received).

Any debts owed to AET must be paid in full or the outstanding amounts will be deducted from the refund.

### **Refund actions apply as follows:**

In the case of AET being unable to start or deliver the course the student can choose to accept either:

- A refund of tuition fees, which will be issued to the student within 28 days.
- Or be placed in an alternative course with another provider. If the student chooses this option, they must sign a new written agreement to indicate they have accepted the placement.
- If the student chooses to receive a refund of tuition fees, AET will calculate the unspent portion of tuition fees paid to date (i.e. tuition fees the student has paid for, but which has not been delivered). The refund will be paid within 28 days after cessation of the course.

## **FEES, CHARGES AND REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

In the case where the Student withdraws from the course:

- If a student withdraws from the course 14 days before the commencement date of the course, 100% of the tuition fees minus administration fee paid for the course will be refunded to the student. Student must withdraw in writing and apply for a refund with Advance Education and Training by completing Refund Application Form. Administration fee is non-refundable.
- If a student withdraws from the course in less than 14 days prior to the course commencement date of the course, 50% of tuition fees minus administration fee paid for that unit of study will be refunded to the student. Student must withdraw in writing and apply for a refund with Advance Education and Training by completing Refund Application Form. Administration fee is non-refundable.
- No refund is applicable if the student withdraws from the course after the course commencement.

Special circumstances:

Where a student withdraws from the course because of exceptional and extenuating circumstances of a compassionate nature, such as a death or severe illness in the immediate family, 100% of all the unspent fees paid will be refunded.

### **Refund procedure**

The student must complete a Refund Application Form to apply for a refund and attach all evidence and supporting documents.

Such documents may include, but are not limited to:

- a completed Withdrawal and Cancellation of Enrolment Form provided by the Institute
- proof of extenuating circumstances of a compassionate nature

Refunds will be made within 28 days of the student's written notification being received by AET; in the case of Advance Education and Training not delivering the courses refunds will be paid within 28 days.

The Chief Executive Officer or the officer nominated by them must approve all student refunds.

Refunds will be paid in Australian dollars to the student or to the person nominated by the student on the refund application.

Details of refunds provided will be maintained in the student's file.

### **Student's Rights to Appeal**

Any student who is refused a refund by AET may appeal within 14 days in writing to the Student Administration.

AET's appeal process does not restrict the student's right to pursue other legal avenues.

This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeal processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.



### **Responsibility**

The CEO is to ensure all requirements of this Policy and Procedure are met. All staff and clients adhere to AET's policies and procedures, and that they are implemented effectively.

The CEO will ensure that AET keep accounts and Records in a way that clearly distinguishes income for fee-for-service training from Government-subsidised training and that AET maintains a separate general ledger account to record receipt of income from tuition fees and the payment of refunds of tuition fees.

Accounts, Administration and Compliance Department is responsible to charge, record and report the Fees as per ASQA and VET Funding guidelines.

### **Related Documents**

- Skills First Guidelines About Fees
- Skills First Eligibility Assessment Policy and Procedure
- Enrolment Application Form
- Digital Evidence of Eligibility or Concession Declaration
- Payment Plan
- Refund Application Form

## FEES, CHARGES AND REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### Appendix 1 : Fee Waiver Grant and Evidence Retention

Circumstance	AET must grant a Fee Waiver if:	If the student is enrolling with :	AET must sight:	AET will retain:
Judy Lazarus Transition Centre	the student is from the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre (as a prisoner within the meaning of the Corrections Act 1986).	any training provider	written confirmation from the management of the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre.	a copy of the written confirmation from the management of the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre
Young people on community based orders	the student is required to do training under a community based order made under the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (the CYF Act)</i> .	any training provider	written confirmation from the relevant Youth Justice Unit of the Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety that the student is required to do training under a community based order made under the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (the CYF Act)</i> .	a copy of the written confirmation from the relevant Youth Justice Unit of the Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety.
Youth Access Initiative	the student is referred to training by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, the Department of Justice and Community Safety, or a referring agency	only a TAFE Institute, Dual Sector University or Learn Local Organisation	a validly endorsed referral form from either the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, the Department of Justice and Community Safety, or a referring agency.	the original referral form (and you must return a copy of the form to the relevant department or referring agency).
Skills First Aboriginal Access Fee Waiver'	the student self-identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent (and is reported as such through the 'Indigenous Status Identifier' field of the Student Statistical Report) and is enrolling in a program at any level.	any training provider	n/a	a copy of the enrolment form on which the student self-identified as indigenous.

## FEES, CHARGES AND REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### Appendix 2 : Government initiatives

Under the:	A student can receive a Fee Concession for:	If they:	AET will sight and retain
Asylum Seeker VET Program	an enrolment in a Skill Set and a program at Certificate IV level and below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-refer and are eligible to participate in the Asylum Seeker VET Program; or</li> <li>• are referred to training by the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre or the Australian Red Cross.</li> </ul>	N/A. The evidence the student is eligible to participate in the Asylum Seeker VET Program (as specified in the Guidelines About Eligibility) is the evidence of their entitlement to concession

### Appendix 3 : Sighting and Retaining evidence of Fee Concession entitlement

Sighting	Retaining
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the original card.</li> <li>correspondence from the card issuer confirming a concession is granted to the student and they may commence claiming their entitlement; or</li> <li>the concession card displayed on a Digital Wallet through a Centrelink Express Plus mobile application on the cardholder's mobile device. The digital card may not be sighted via a screen shot of the card that is e-mailed or otherwise reproduced.</li> </ul>	<p>a written declaration attached to the student's file stating that the evidence has been sighted, showing the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>name of your authorised delegate who sighted the evidence.</li> <li>date the evidence was sighted.</li> <li>concession holder's name; and</li> <li>card type.</li> </ul>
OR	
the equivalent record of a concession card as extracted from Centrelink Confirmation eServices by you.	an extract from Centrelink Confirmation eServices showing the card type and the date the extract was made.
OR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>confirmation from a Gateway Service Provider<sup>2</sup> that it has connected to the Commonwealth Government's Document Verification Service (the DVS)<sup>3</sup> and verified that the student's name and concession card number match a current and valid record of concession entitlement in the DVS; and</li> <li>information from the student about the type of concession card they hold, to confirm it is a type accepted by us.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a transaction record generated by securely logging in to the administrative platform provided by the Gateway Service Provider, that shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the concession holder's name; and</li> <li>that their name and concession card number were verified to match a current and valid concession entitlement in the DVS; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>a record of the type of concession card the student holds, attached to the student's file</li> </ul>
<p>A Gateway Service Provider is an organisation authorised to direct information match requests to and from the Commonwealth Government's Document Verification Service (the DVS). The DVS is a national online system that allows organisations to compare an individual's identifying information with a government record.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> If the student is a dependant spouse or dependant child of the concession card holder and the concession is verified for the primary card holder, also make a note on the student's file describing the student's relationship to the card holder.</p>	