

Refund of Tuition Fees for International Students

Document type:	Operating Procedure
Administering Entity:	International Marketing and Pathways Student Administration and Services Financial Services Directorate
Records Management System Number:	D09/120794
Date approved:	16 November 2009
Approved by:	Director, International Marketing and Pathways
Indicative time for review:	November 2011
Responsibility for review:	Director, International Marketing and Pathways
Related policies or other documents:	

Rationale and Scope

The revised National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (National Code 2007) requires UNE to demonstrate its compliance with the National Code 2007 at the point of CRICOS registration and throughout its CRICOS registration period.

This compliance requirement also applies to courses delivered in association with another provider where UNE is the registered provider. UNE is responsible for breaches of the National Code, whatever the nature of its contractual or other arrangements with another provider.

Standard 3 of the National Code 2007 requires that a written agreement between UNE and the student sets out the services to be provided, fees payable and information in relation to refunds of tuition fees.

To comply with Standard 3, UNE must enter into a written agreement with the student, signed or otherwise accepted by that student (or the student's parent or legal guardian if the student is under 18 years of age), concurrently with or prior to accepting tuition fees from the student. The agreement must include information in relation to refunds of tuition fees money. In the case of either the student or UNE defaulting, the written agreement must include:

- Amounts that may or may not be re-paid to the student (including any tuition fees collected by education agents on behalf of UNE).
- Processes for claiming a refund.
- A plain, English version of what happens in the event of a course not being delivered.
- A statement that "This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws".

For the purposes of this procedure, the term 'start date' refers to one of the following:

- The first day of lectures as listed in the annual UNE Principal Dates OR
- The first day a student commences their Masters by Research candidature OR

- The first day a student commences their PhD candidature OR
- The first day a Language Training Centre student commences their English language course.

For the purposes of this procedure, the term 'annual tuition fee' is defined as the *tuition fee payable for an international student's degree, certificate or diploma course over a one-year period.*

Principle

- 1.1 If a student seeks a refund, they must inform the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions, International Marketing and Pathways in writing; this can be via posted letter, fax or by e-mail. They must include the following information in their request:
 - a) Full name;
 - b) UNE student number;
 - c) The formal name of the course which they wish to withdraw from;
 - d) The date the course started; and
 - e) The date the student withdrew from the course;
 - f) Documentary evidence where withdrawal is based on exceptional circumstances.

- 1.2 It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of the letter/fax/e-mail and a record of when it was sent to Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions, International Marketing and Pathways.

- 1.3 The amount a student is to be refunded depends on when they notify the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions, of their request for a refund as follows:
 - a) If a student notifies the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions of their withdrawal more than four (4) weeks before the start date, 90% of the annual tuition fee paid will be refunded.
 - b) If a student notifies the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions of their withdrawal less than four (4) weeks before the start date, 50% of the annual tuition fee paid will be refunded.
 - c) If a student notifies the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions of their withdrawal up to four (4) weeks after the start date, 50% of the annual tuition fee paid will be refunded.
 - d) If a student notifies the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions of their withdrawal more than four (4) weeks after the start date, there will be no refund of the annual tuition fee paid.

- 1.4 In addition to the above, notice of withdrawal due to compassionate and compelling circumstances may be accepted by the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions, as grounds for either partial or a full refund of fees. Applications must provide documentary evidence as per UNE's Guidelines for Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances for full-time International Students.

- 1.5 If a student fails to obtain a Student Visa to study at UNE, the University will refund 100% of the tuition fees paid.
- 1.6 A student whose visa is cancelled shall not be eligible for a refund unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- 1.7 In cases where an offer was made on the basis of fraudulent documents, UNE reserves the right to retain any portion of the tuition fees.
- 1.8 Refunds to International Students will be paid within four (4) weeks after the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions receives a student's written request for a refund. All refunds will be paid to the person who originally paid the tuition fees. Refunds will be reimbursed in the same currency as the fees were originally paid and will be made in the student's home country except in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.9 In the event that an Offer of Admission is withdrawn by the University or it is unable to provide the course, all tuition fees paid are fully refundable, unless the offer was made on the basis of incorrect or incomplete information being supplied by the applicant or the student. In such cases, UNE reserves the right to retain up to 10 per cent of the tuition fee as well as any cost incurred in recruiting the student.
- 1.10 In the event a student fails to meet course progression rules and is permitted to re-enrol, that student will be eligible for a full refund of fees paid in advance of the notification of exclusion.
- 1.11 In the event that an international student who has already paid tuition fees applicable to international students for a given semester, is granted Permanent Resident status in Australia, a total refund of these fees will be paid less any agent fee, if the student has:
 - a) obtained Permanent Resident status by the census date for that semester
 - b) been enrolled by the University as a Commonwealth Supported Student under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 or
 - c) has made arrangements with the University to pay fees as a domestic (non-international) student.
- 1.12 In the event of a student paying a fee for a "packaged" offer as approved by the Director, International Marketing and Pathways, and the student does not enroll at UNE, no refund is payable under any circumstances.

Procedure

- 2.1 Written notification of intent to seek a refund is received by the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions, International Marketing and Pathways, together with any required documentation.
- 2.2 The Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions places the correspondence on the Records Management System via TRIM and forwards the request to the relevant Directorate. For:

- 2.2.1 Non-Enrolled Students: The request is forwarded to the Supervisor, Accounts Receivable, Financial Services Directorate, for action.
- 2.2.2 Enrolled Student: The request is forwarded to the Customer Services Manager, Student Centre, for action.
- 2.3 For refunds paid via:
- 2.3.1 Electronic Transfer: The transfer is made directly to either the student or the person who originally paid the tuition fees. The Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions checks with the Supervisor, Accounts Receivable, Financial Services Directorate or the Customer Services Manager, Student Centre, as applicable, of the date the transfer is made.
- 2.3.2 International Bank Draft: Either the Supervisor, Accounts Receivable, Financial Services Directorate or the Customer Services Manager, Student Centre, as applicable, forwards the International Bank Draft to the Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions.

The Manager, International Recruitment and Admissions forwards the International Bank Draft to either the student or the person who originally paid the tuition fees via International Courier.

Related Documents

- National Code 2007
- ESOS Regulations 2001
- AVCC Provision of Education to International Students: Code of Practice and Guidelines for Australian Universities